

# MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

Mission Statement .....	3
Letter From the Chair .....	4
State Rehabilitation Council .....	5
Council's Purpose .....	6

## MISSOURI VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Vision, Mission, and Principles .....	7
Letter to the Governor .....	8
Highlights .....	9
Agency Overview .....	10
Success Stories: Jared Niemeyer .....	12

## MAJOR TOPICS

Partnering .....	13
Success Stories: Elderoy Moore .....	14
Services .....	16
Success Stories: Austin Goad .....	18

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Satisfaction Survey .....	20
Program Data .....	22
Offices .....	24

**Note:** This annual report for calendar year 2023 covers information and data from Program Year (PY) 2022 (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023).



Photo of Ha Ha Tonka State Park in Camdenton provided by Wayne Clause.

# MISSION STATEMENT

## MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

### OUR VISION

The Missouri State Rehabilitation Council envisions a society that values all of its members equally and provides opportunities so that all people are able to meet their needs, fulfill their dreams, and participate in society.

### OUR MISSION

To ensure that persons with disabilities have opportunities to be as productive as possible by advising Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation that services provided to persons with disabilities are:

- of the highest quality.
- consumer directed.
- responsive to consumer choice.
- effective.
- individualized.
- culturally specific and relevant to labor market trends.

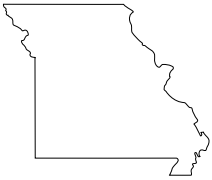
### OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

To work in partnership with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to achieve positive outcomes for persons with disabilities by:

- providing input on the state plan, policies, and practices affecting services to persons with disabilities.
- obtaining and interpreting consumer input.
- identifying corrective action consistent with that input.
- advocating for adequate resources to ensure that the rehabilitation needs of all Missourians are met.
- identifying strategies to address the needs of people who are not being served or who are being underserved.
- supporting VR in complying with laws applicable to persons with disabilities.

*(Adopted Nov. 4, 1999)*

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



## MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

3024 Dupont Circle ■ Jefferson City, Missouri 65109  
Phone: 573-751-3251 ■ Fax: 573-751-1441

**Earl Brown**, Salem  
Chairperson

**Karen Gridley**, Kansas City  
Vice Chairperson

**Daniel Cayou**, Jefferson City

**Diana Eakright**, Independence

**Stacie Holt**, Jefferson City

**Bob Hosutt**, Nixa

**Debby Loveall-Stewart**, Joplin

**Lydia Mitchell**, Florissant

**Gary Otten**, St. Louis

**Lori Pace**, Rogersville

**Sarah Prechtel**, St. Louis

**Jennifer Stanfield**, St. Louis

**Tim Tadlock**, Gallatin

**Yvonne Wright**, New Bloomfield

**Chris Clause**, California  
Ex Officio Member  
VR Assistant Commissioner

December 30, 2023

The Honorable Michael L. Parson  
Governor of Missouri  
State Capitol  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Parson:

On behalf of the members of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council, it is my honor to present the Council's annual report for 2023. In these pages, you will find the progress made by Missouri citizens who were served by vocational rehabilitation programs.

Each Council member has unique experiences in advocating for the rights of our fellow Missourians whose physical or mental disabilities may pose barriers to productive employment. Through our quarterly meetings and committee deliberations, we have given our support to Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to empower individuals with disabilities and to encourage decisions that lead to greater self-sufficiency.

We have advised Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation on innovative programming to reach the underserved populations in the state and on exploring additional methods of obtaining consumer satisfaction feedback.

It has been my great privilege to work with members of the Council as well as with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation staff, all of whom are dedicated to providing our citizens with the opportunity to make choices in obtaining meaningful employment. Employment is a vital key to independence and equality.

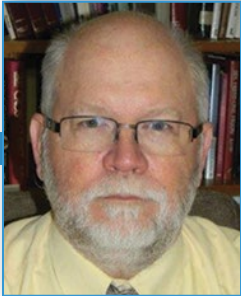
Respectfully,

Earl Brown  
Chairperson



# STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

## CHAIRPERSON



**EARL BROWN**  
Salem

## VICE CHAIRPERSON



**KAREN GRIDLEY**  
Kansas City

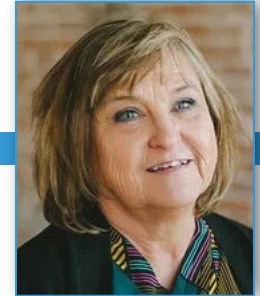
## EX OFFICIO MEMBER



**CHRIS CLAUSE**  
California



**DANIEL CAYOU**  
Jefferson City



**DIANA EAKRIGHT**  
Independence



**STACIE HOLT**  
Jefferson City



**BOB HOSUTT**  
Nixa



**DEBBY LOVEALL-STEWART**  
Joplin



**LYDIA MITCHELL**  
Florissant



**GARY OTTEN**  
St. Louis



**LORI PACE**  
Rogersville



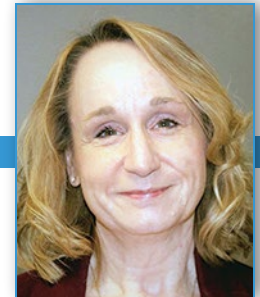
**SARAH PRECHTEL**  
St. Louis



**JENNIFER STANFIELD**  
St. Louis



**TIM TADLOCK**  
Gallatin



**YVONNE WRIGHT**  
New Bloomfield

# COUNCIL'S PURPOSE

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was first authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 2014 (referred to hereafter as the Act). Section 105 of the Act requires the state vocational rehabilitation agency to establish a council.

The SRC was initially formed on June 1, 1993. Members are appointed by the governor and serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. As required by the Act, SRC members represent the Statewide Independent Living Council; the Parent Training and Information Center; the Client Assistance Program; the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program; the Office of Special Education, which is the state agency responsible for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the Missouri Workforce Development Board; community rehabilitation program service providers; disability advocacy groups; current or former applicants/recipients of vocational rehabilitation services; and business, industry, and labor.

The SRC is responsible for reviewing, analyzing, and advising VR regarding its performance on such issues as eligibility; the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services; and any other functions affecting people with disabilities. Full SRC meetings are held quarterly on the second Wednesday of February, May, August, and November. Subcommittees meet as needed throughout the year.

During 2023, the SRC was actively involved with VR in the activities below:

Reviewed and provided recommendations to VR regarding the combined state plan's comprehensive statewide needs assessment, goals, priorities, performance accountability measures, and comprehensive system of personnel development

Provided recommendations to VR on policy revisions and rule changes

Participated in and reviewed feedback from VR public hearings to provide input on the combined state plan

Evaluated and provided recommendations on the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services and satisfaction with those services

Reviewed hearing decisions and mediation outcomes

Assisted VR staff in preparing the SRC's annual report for the governor and the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on the status of vocational rehabilitation services in Missouri

Provided comments to VR regarding issues pertaining to waiting lists (Order of Selection)

Coordinated and participated in presentations and activities with other councils and agencies including the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Client Assistance Program, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Department of Mental Health, the Parent Training and Information Center, Missouri Assistive Technology, the Hearing Loss Association, the Governor's Council on Disability, the Office of Workforce Development, and the Office of Special Education

# — VISION, MISSION, AND PRINCIPLES —

## MISSOURI VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

### VISION

Transforming lives through a great VR experience for everyone

### MISSION

Empowering people with disabilities through employment

### OPERATING PRINCIPLES

We will:

- Act with a sense of urgency.
- Provide quality customer service.
- Maximize our resources.
- Do the right thing.
- Put people first.
- Continuously evaluate our practices/processes.



# LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR



Office of Adult Learning and  
Rehabilitation Services

Chris Clause, Ph.D. • *Assistant Commissioner*

3024 Dupont Circle • Jefferson City, MO 65109 • [vr.dese.mo.gov](http://vr.dese.mo.gov)

December 30, 2023

The Honorable Michael L. Parson  
Governor of Missouri  
State Capitol  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Parson:

The annual report presented to you from the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for 2023 provides information on the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation employment program for individuals with disabilities.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation has operated under an Order of Selection since October 2003 due to the number of applicants requesting services, rising service costs, and limited federal funding. The Rehabilitation Act requires eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities to receive services first. All other eligible individuals receive services as funds become available.

During Program Year 2022, Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation helped 3,720 individuals reach successful employment outcomes.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with school districts across the state. The program annually provides transition services, including pre-employment transition services, to approximately 12,000 high school students and youths with disabilities.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation grant dollars expended for purchased client services from community vendors are effective and help local economies. In addition, the total annual increase in earnings for individuals with successful outcomes was over \$69 million. The program's customer satisfaction survey results are consistently among the top in the nation.

In closing, the Council and I offer our sincere appreciation for your personal interest and support in serving people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "C. Clause".

Chris Clause, Ph.D.  
Assistant Commissioner, Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services



# HIGHLIGHTS



**32,587**  
individuals worked  
with VR counselors.



**1,338**  
successfully employed  
individuals received supported  
employment services.



**3,720**  
individuals achieved successful  
employment outcomes.



**557**  
successfully employed individuals  
received Individual Placement  
and Support services.



**2,896**  
individuals achieved a  
measurable skill gain in an  
educational or training program.



**97%**  
of successfully employed individuals  
had significant disabilities.



**1,579**  
youths reached successful  
employment outcomes.



**\$69,638,400**  
was the total annual increase  
in earnings for individuals  
with successful outcomes.

# AGENCY OVERVIEW

Prepared on behalf of the SRC, this annual report highlights various programs and services of VR during Program Year (PY) 2022 from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023. VR services are reported on a federal program year rather than a federal fiscal year.

VR operates under an Order of Selection with three priority categories. Eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities are required by law to receive services first (Category 1). Eligible individuals who have less significant disabilities are required to be placed on a waiting list for services (Categories 2 and 3). At the time of this report, all eligible individuals were being served without a wait list.

During PY 2022, VR counselors worked with more than 32,000 individuals in various categories and helped 3,720 individuals reach a successful employment outcome. On an average daily basis, VR served more than 11,000 individuals.

## STATE FUNDING AND THE SOCIAL SECURITY REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

VR receives state funding from the general revenue fund, the Missouri Lottery, and the Department of Mental Health. The match requirement is 21.3 percent state funding and 78.7 percent federal funding.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) reimburses state vocational rehabilitation agencies for the costs of providing services to assist SSA disability recipients in becoming gainfully employed. Ticket Tracker software is used to interface with VR's case-management system. The software matches and identifies individuals receiving SSA disability benefits whom VR helped in reaching their employment goals. Ticket Tracker has streamlined the consumer identification and reimbursement submission process, enabling VR to receive SSA reimbursements in a more timely and efficient manner. In PY 2022, VR received \$4,265,580 in reimbursement claims. A portion of this funding helps support the Centers for Independent Living in Missouri.

## WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

VR operates under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, which strengthens the workforce development system by aligning and improving employment, training, and educational programs.

With regard to VR, WIOA focuses on providing services to individuals with disabilities, including youths and students with disabilities, to assist them in achieving competitive, integrated employment. VR continues to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment. VR is committed to developing new relationships with employers and providing flexible strategies like on-the-job training, internships, apprenticeships, and customized employment. VR works with other agencies to create a combined state plan that describes how VR and its partners will collaboratively deliver integrated services to Missouri's job seekers, workers, and employers.



**Louis Gatewood**, VR Coordinator of Client Services, presented at the SRC's August meeting.

## COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

VR and the SRC jointly conduct an annual comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Missourians. The conclusions and recommendations of the assessment are incorporated into VR's goals and priorities for the purpose of improving services.

VR uses many methods to collect information for the assessment including customer satisfaction surveys, public hearings, VR strategic teams, SRC input, VR case data, and national census statistics.

Two areas that the assessment specifically focuses on are the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals from populations that have been traditionally unserved or underserved by vocational rehabilitation programs. The PY 2022 needs assessment identified the minority populations of Hispanics and African-Americans, along with individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI), and justice and foster care involved students with disabilities, as underserved. Figure 1 (page 12) reflects the closure percentages by ethnicity for PY 2022.

VR remains committed to improving services for underserved populations, increasing their employment outcomes, and reducing the number of individuals from these populations who drop out prior to receiving services.

VR utilizes the following strategies to address these areas of need:

- VR employs a consultant who works with the VR Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team to develop strategies for serving underserved populations and individuals from diverse cultures, as well as for the recruitment of a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Multiple pilot projects have been developed to provide peer mentoring to students with disabilities involved in the justice and foster care systems, along with homeless and housing-insecure youths.
- Employees are provided with training opportunities on cultural competency that cover aspects of diversity.
- An autism services liaison has been appointed to serve as a resource for staff throughout the state. This liaison works with providers on strategies for better serving individuals with ASD.
- Employment Services Plus has been developed. This program is designed to assist individuals with ASD, TBI, or deafness/hearing loss who require additional supports to reach successful employment outcomes.



During the May meeting, **Lori Pace** (left), SRC Chairperson, handed over the position to newly elected **Earl Brown** (right).



# AGENCY OVERVIEW



Christina Bliss received VR services and is currently working at Walmart in Buffalo.

The assessment also addresses the necessities of youths and students with disabilities, including their need for pre-employment or other transition services. One of VR's goals is to increase the number of students with disabilities who access VR services. For strategy information on this area of need, see page 16.

## CLOSURE PERCENTAGES BY ETHNICITY: PY 2022

STATUS	WHITE	AFRICAN-AMERICAN	OTHER
3,720 successful employment outcomes	76%	18%	6%
3,154 closed unsuccessfully after services	72%	23%	5%
3,167 closed after eligibility before services	70%	23%	7%

Figure 1

## SUCCESS STORIES: JARED NIEMEYER

Jared's Jams began in 2014 as a way for Jared Niemeyer to give back to the Special Olympics, an organization that he participated in and is dear to his heart. He raised money by making jam from his family farm's fruits and selling it at the local farmers market. All profit went to the Special Olympics. That same year, Jared represented the Special Olympics at the United Nations. As a person with a disability, he shared his experience of living in the community and working in a competitive, integrated setting. (He was invited to speak again in 2019.)

Jared moved from local markets to starting his own successful business in 2016. He opened a storefront operation in Edina and also sells his products online.

Jared was introduced to VR while participating in a work experience program during his senior year of high school. VR helped him with the transition from school into the world of work through a job at his local Hy-Vee. This past summer, Jared worked with VR again – this time as an employer. Through the collaborative efforts of Jared's Jams, VR, and the Center for Human Services, six students with disabilities from Knox County High School worked at Jared's store.

As both an employer and a person with a disability, he provided a different perspective to the students who worked for him. He told them, "Your disability doesn't define you. Never give up, and dream big." Great advice from someone who has realized his own dreams. ■



# PARTNERING

## WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT PARTNERS

WIOA requires the alignment of core programs in order to provide coordinated and streamlined services. These core programs are VR; Rehabilitation Services for the Blind; Adult Education and Literacy; Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth; and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families is a combined partner.) Teams composed of representatives from WIOA core partner programs, as well as other partner organizations, have been formed to develop strategies for serving mutual clients. These teams have identified focus areas, such as best practices and agency cross-trainings, that can be shared statewide and at the local level. All program partners strive to improve the workforce system and services to job seekers, employees, and employers.

VR collaborates, coordinates, and cooperates with partner programs to ensure that individuals with disabilities benefit from seamless access to career services, education, and training. VR also participates in business services teams within the workforce system to better serve employers' needs. VR offers a dual-customer approach by supporting its job candidates and businesses in order to achieve successful outcomes for both.

## CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

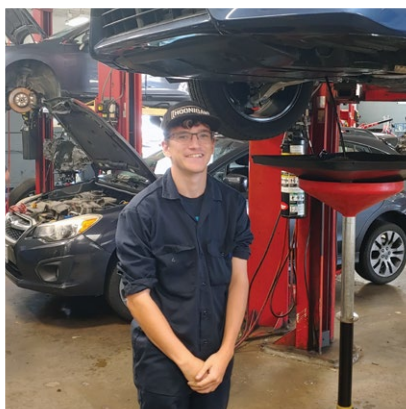
Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are community-based nonresidential programs designed to promote independent living for people with disabilities. In Missouri, 22 CILs offer independent living services. The CILs are funded through federal and state independent living grants and are managed by local boards composed of individuals with disabilities who have been successful in establishing their own independent lifestyles. VR and the CILs work together on a regular basis to share referrals and provide services to mutual clientele. A number of CILs have VR district office staff as active board members. VR and the CILs have developed a summer work experience program to provide pre-employment transition services. The CILs offer students who are potentially eligible for VR services access to job exploration activities, workplace-readiness training, social support, and instruction on self-advocacy (including peer mentoring). Last summer, five CILs were involved in the program and worked with 18 students.

## MISSOURI REENTRY PROCESS

VR participates in the Missouri Reentry Process, which encourages collaboration among government and local agencies to improve the transition of offenders leaving prison and returning to local communities and work. State government agencies are the Departments of Corrections, Higher Education and Workforce Development, Economic Development, Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, Public Safety, Revenue, Social Services, Transportation, and the Office of the State Courts Administrator. Other partnering agencies include the federal probation system along with local law enforcement, faith-based organizations, service providers, and treatment programs.



VR provided **Scott Steelman-Rhoden** with services to maintain his job as an inclusion educator. He completed training to become a benefits counselor at Abilities First Employment Services in Springfield.



**Henry Simon** received VR services that helped him secure a lube technician job with a Subaru dealership in Creve Coeur.

VR also is participating in a pilot program with the Departments of Corrections, Social Services, and Higher Education and Workforce Development. VR provides career counseling and coordinating services with other agencies for pre-release offenders with disabilities in order to assist them in finding employment and returning to their communities.

## DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

The Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Divisions of Behavioral Health (DBH) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) have been longstanding partners with VR in assisting eligible individuals seeking vocational rehabilitation services in order to gain employment. Partnership activities include the funding of DB101, a customized Missouri benefits-planning website. Cross-system collaboration remains ongoing through system change initiatives, grant and technical support opportunities, and local/regional trainings. VR has appointed a DMH liaison, and DMH has representation on WIOA teams consisting of combined partner programs and other partner agencies.

## SUCCESS STORIES: ELDEROY MOORE

When Elderoy Moore's mother brought him to VR for help with training and job placement, he had a lot of apprehension. After all, he had never worked at a job before. But, his counselor quickly discovered that he was open to vocational goals, he has a good memory, and he picks up tasks quickly.

A 20-year-old with autism, Elderoy was given lots of encouragement and was told that he would have the support of a job coach to make sure he learned his duties and to answer any questions that he had once he began working. Through his involvement with VR, he participated in work experiences at three different community-based sites. This gave him the opportunity to try out different positions that might fit his skill-set. He bagged groceries, gathered shopping carts, baked cookies, cleaned floors, and performed all of the tasks that were asked of him.

That experience led to Elderoy's current position at Sodexo as a busser and a stocker. He makes good money, and his employer has nothing but great things to say about him. His job meets all of his needs, and he is happy there.

Elderoy is an individual who does well with a routine and comes from a very supportive family. He is punctual, reliable, and when you meet him, he will always give you a big smile. ■







**Terren Branson, Zach Lloyd, Bryson Montgomery, Kaden Montgomery, and Nihkar Patel** (left to right) participated in the VR summer work experience program. They worked at Discovery Center of Springfield. VR collaborated with The Arc of the Ozarks to provide services.



**Tre'Vontay Anderson** received VR services and works for the Springfield R-XII School District as a custodian.

In partnership with DBH, Individual Placement and Support (IPS), an evidence-based supported employment service for adults with mental illness, has been a focus. IPS requires close program and clinical relationships between local mental health and vocational rehabilitation staff to ensure success.

VR also is partnering with DD and other agencies to provide a customized employment program that promotes the specific abilities of individuals with disabilities in order to meet employers' needs.

## COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

VR and community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) collaboratively work with an outcome-based service model that emphasizes quality employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. CRPs are nonprofit organizations accredited by recognized professional associations that have developed commonly accepted processes for evaluating employment-related services. All independently owned and operated, CRPs provide services that may include vocational planning, job development and placement services, skills training, specialized employment services, supported employment, and transition services.

VR and its CRP partners have implemented several projects to improve services. During summer 2023, a six-week work experience program for students with disabilities was held. Sixty-six CRPs, 1,351 VR-eligible students, and more than 200 schools participated at 313 employment sites. Collaboration and partnership are cornerstones of the relationship between VR and CRPs and have fostered an environment of creativity and innovation. The VR-CRP steering committee meets regularly to review progress on its organizations' joint projects and on service delivery.



**Noah Marler** (right) participated in the VR summer work experience program. **Elisha Gillum** (left), his job coach with Pony Bird, assisted him during his employment at Schnucks in St. Louis.

## TRANSITION SERVICES

VR places a significant emphasis on services to youths and students with the intent of ensuring that young individuals with disabilities are better prepared and have more opportunities for competitive, integrated employment. In collaboration with local education agencies, VR provides pre-employment transition services to eligible or potentially eligible students ages 16 to 21. These services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace-readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy (including peer mentoring).

VR has helped to develop and implement innovative programs to provide pre-employment transition services. VR also has established partnerships with the University of Missouri's College of Education, CILs, CRPs, businesses, and local school districts. With its partners, VR is expanding pre-employment transition services to all parts of the state. During PY 2022, over 9,800 potentially eligible students received at least one pre-employment transition service.

VR provides youths with disabilities ages 14 to 24 a variety of other transition services such as job placement, supported employment, training, and rehabilitation technology. A team of professionals from VR, local school districts, and other agencies has been assembled to offer support and technical assistance on these services.

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Disability Categories of Those Served: PY 2022

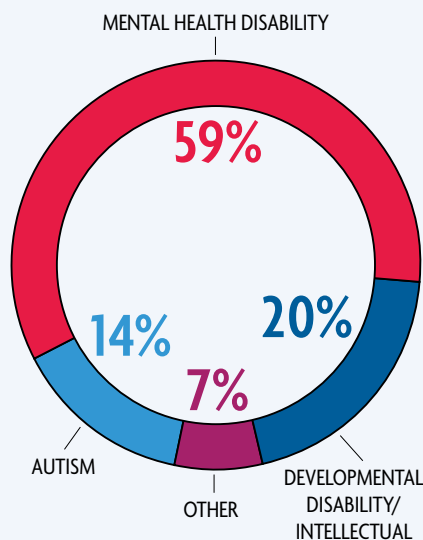


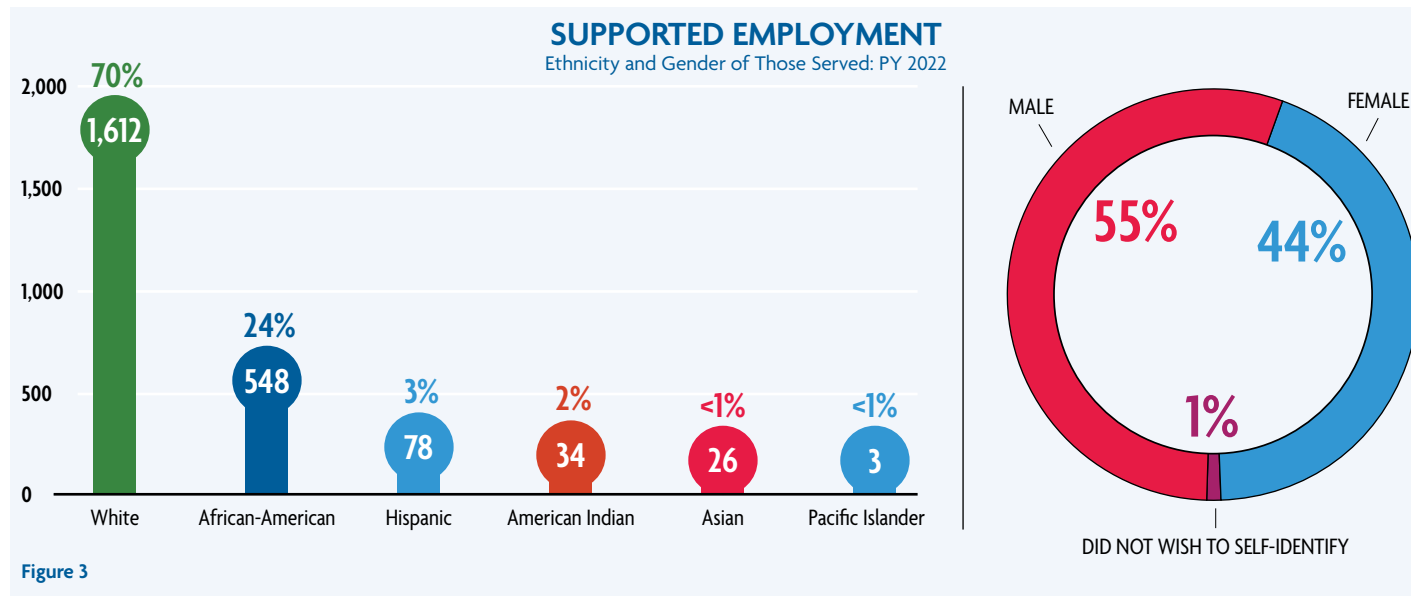
Figure 2

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

VR provides supported employment (SE) services to a diverse population as indicated by Figures 2-5 (pages 16-17). Some of these services are jointly provided by DMH DBH-DD. SE is defined as competitive work in an integrated work setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. During PY 2022, 1,338 individuals who received SE services and exited the program were successfully employed.

In PY 2022, VR worked with 120 CRP locations that provide SE services and cover all counties in Missouri. An outcome-based model of SE services is used that features a period of discovery and exploration with the individual to develop vocational direction and community-based job exploration. Outcomes include job placement, 30 days of independent employment, and 90 days of employment. In addition to these milestones, on-the-job and off-site supports may also be authorized.

VR places an emphasis on the development of natural support systems to help individuals participating in supported employment successfully remain in the workforce. These natural supports help to reduce the cost of providing SE services. Figure 5 (page 17) shows the average cost of services, hourly wages, and other statistics for supported employment.



**SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**  
Age of Those Served: PY 2022

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Less than 25	815	35%
25-34	517	23%
35-44	412	18%
45-54	323	14%
55-64	205	9%
65 and over	29	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,301</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 4**

## OTHER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS: PY 2022

Average cost of supported employment services per person .....	<b>\$1,369</b>
Average hourly wage per person .....	<b>\$13.03</b>
Average hours per week worked per person .....	<b>24</b>
Successful outcomes .....	<b>1,338</b>
Total participants .....	<b>2,301</b>

**Figure 5**

**Note:** All information in figures 2-5 applies to SE services only.





**Jessica Bloch**, VR manager, presented during the SRC's May meeting.

## REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY

In PY 2022, VR provided a variety of rehabilitation technology services, assistive devices, and equipment to 684 individuals who received services and exited the program. VR purchases assistive devices to help with increasing, maintaining, or improving functional capabilities. Devices could include hearing aids and other personal listening and communication devices, vehicle and home modifications, wheelchairs, and other powered mobility equipment. Rehabilitation technology services include consultation, evaluation, design, customization, adaptation, maintenance, repair, therapy, and technical training.

VR and Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) have collaborated to develop a cooperative agreement to ensure the maximum statewide utilization of services. The agreement provides a plan for service coordination; for using resources to the best advantage; for information sharing, technical support, and training; to facilitate the referral of potentially eligible individuals between agencies; and to help eligible people obtain rehabilitation technology services. A VR staff member is a representative on the MoAT Advisory Council.

## SUCCESS STORIES: AUSTIN GOAD

When Austin Goad was faced with difficult challenges in his life, he never gave up. He always stayed positive, remained friendly, and did what he needed to do to accomplish his goals.

Austin was referred to VR during his senior year of high school. At that time, he already knew he wanted to be a pilot, and he did most of the research himself about how to make this dream a reality. VR provided him with guidance and counseling, tuition, books, and supplies during his two years of community college, along with additional assistance for housing, utilities, and meals after he transferred to the University of Central Missouri.

During his junior year, Austin was diagnosed with depression. As part of aviation regulations, he was not allowed to continue with flight lessons until he was evaluated by doctors for a certain period of time. This delayed his graduation by a year, but he did not give up on his dream. He traveled three hours for his appointments and evaluations since that was the closest location available. After completing the necessary requirements, he was granted a medical release to resume his flight lessons and is on-track to graduate shortly with a professional pilot bachelor's degree.

Austin has always been very appreciative for all of the services that VR has provided. He is a hard worker who is a motivated, positive, and caring individual. ■



# SERVICES

In April, MoAT presented the Power Up 2023 Assistive Technology Conference and Expo. The conference was open to service providers, consumers, independent living specialists, VR staff and other professionals in the rehabilitation field. Twenty-one VR staff members attended the event. The conference was successful in providing an opportunity to view state-of-the-art technology and equipment designed to enhance and promote independence and quality of life.

Several VR professionals have specialized caseloads in the area of rehabilitation technology. Located throughout Missouri are five VR counselors and one assistant director who are skilled in manual communication for the deaf and hard of hearing. VR employs a director and assistant director of rehabilitation technology who assist staff statewide on delivering rehabilitation technology services.

VR utilizes assistive technology demonstration sites located at CILs across the state for exploring, reviewing, and demonstrating various devices, services, and resources that are available to individuals with alternative communication needs. VR counselors are allowed to borrow rehabilitation technology equipment from MoAT for individuals to test before purchase.



**Adam Newman** currently receives assistance from VR. He is employed at Hannibal Regional Hospital in environmental services.



**Gavin Cohan**, a VR summer work experience participant, spoke about working for the St. Charles County Ambulance District during the SRC's August meeting. VR and BCI Skills Center collaborated to provide him with services.

# SATISFACTION SURVEY

Satisfaction with staff and services is a VR priority, and the SRC's Program Evaluation Committee continues to work with VR on reviewing and analyzing feedback from individuals who receive VR services. This feedback is shared with management, supervisors, and counselors and is used as a tool to improve services, evaluate staff performance, and determine training needs.

During PY 2022, survey letters and postage-paid envelopes were mailed to a random sample of 11,176 individuals at various stages in the rehabilitation process. Survey feedback was positive. Results showed that 98 percent of those surveyed felt they were treated with respect, 97 percent felt they knew the purpose of VR, and 95 percent felt that staff was available when needed. The overall results are listed on page 21.

## SURVEY COMMENTS

*"VR helped me to manage my life better by finding me a job that helps to support my needs."*

*"VR helped me financially to obtain my degree, which led to employment."*

*"I could find a job and keep it. They kept me on track."*

*"Thank you for everything you have done to help me have a better life!"*

*"VR has been a wonderful stepping stone in my growth, learning, and finding who I am, along with hidden abilities to now move forward with confidence of doing this on my own."*



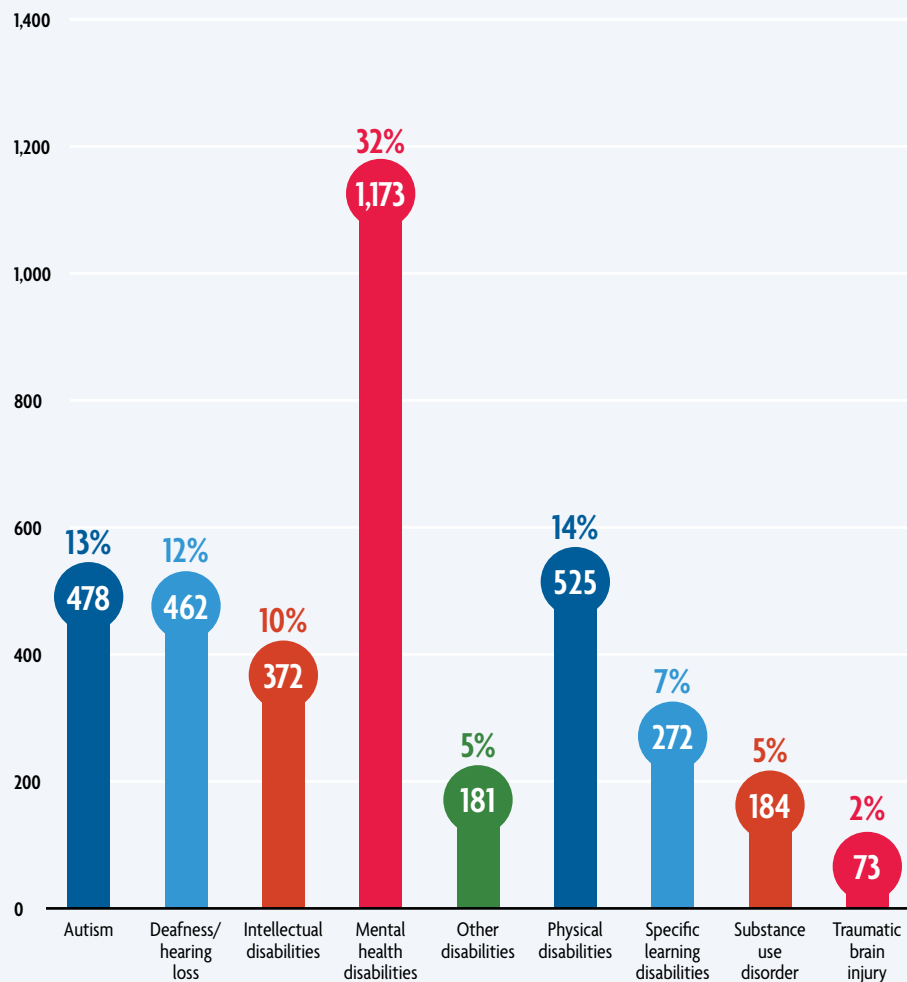
# SATISFACTION SURVEY

SURVEY RESULTS (Specific group responses)	TOTAL RESPONSES RECEIVED	STAFF WAS AVAILABLE		STAFF TREATED ME WITH RESPECT		I KNEW PURPOSE OF VR SERVICES		COUNSELOR HELPED PLAN SERVICES		COUNSELOR EXPLAINED CHOICES	
		YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Total responses	1,133	95%	5%	98%	2%	97%	3%	92%	8%	95%	5%
Open cases	557	97%	3%	99%	1%	97%	3%	95%	5%	95%	5%
Successful outcomes	400	98%	2%	99%	1%	99%	1%	96%	4%	98%	2%
Unsuccessful outcomes; closed before services	54	82%	18%	96%	4%	96%	4%	63%	37%	86%	14%
Unsuccessful outcomes; closed after services	122	86%	14%	92%	8%	90%	10%	79%	21%	88%	12%
Supported employment individuals	306	94%	6%	98%	2%	99%	1%	93%	7%	95%	5%
Individuals under 25 at application	417	96%	4%	99%	1%	98%	2%	93%	7%	95%	5%
Individuals with autism	164	94%	6%	98%	2%	99%	1%	94%	6%	95%	5%
Individuals with deafness/hearing loss	134	95%	5%	97%	3%	90%	10%	94%	6%	94%	6%
Individuals with mental health disabilities	366	95%	5%	99%	1%	96%	4%	90%	10%	94%	6%
Individuals with physical disabilities	169	95%	5%	96%	4%	96%	4%	92%	8%	95%	5%
Individuals with traumatic brain injury	38	95%	5%	100%	0%	97%	3%	86%	14%	97%	3%
Individuals with other disabilities	201	97%	3%	99%	1%	94%	6%	94%	6%	96%	4%

# PROGRAM DATA

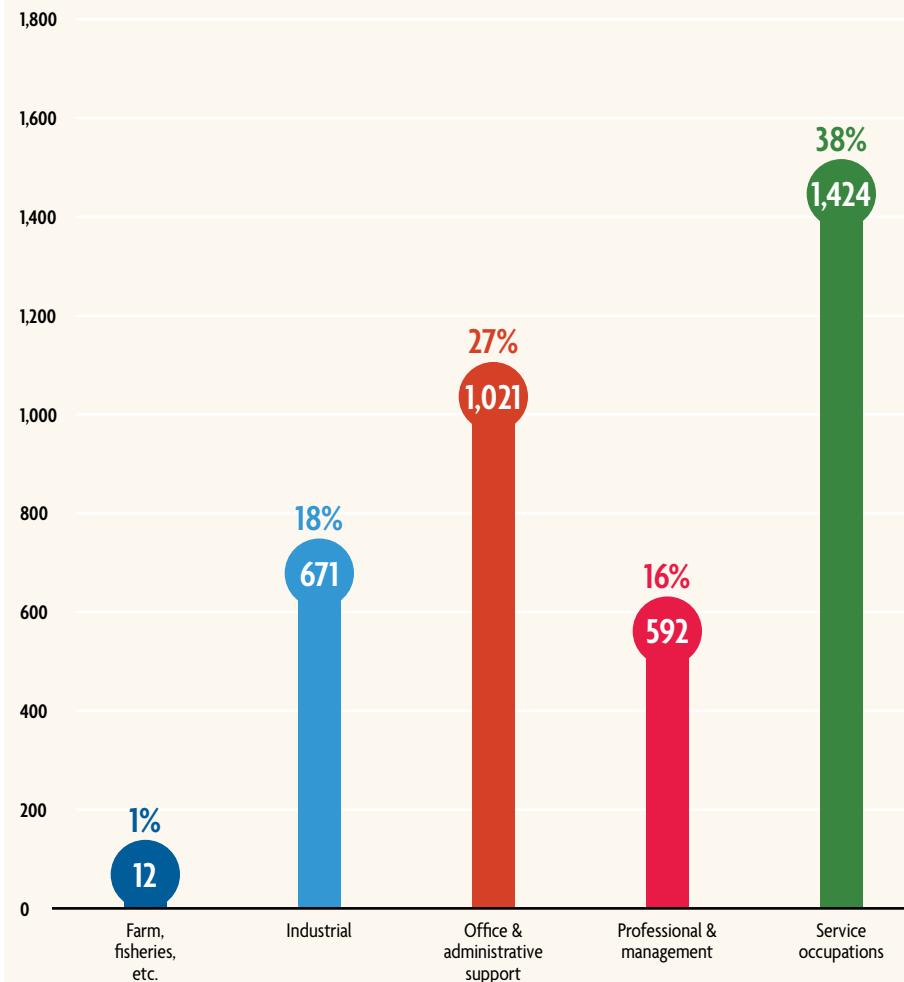
## DISABILITY CATEGORIES

3,720 Individuals With Successful Employment Outcomes: PY 2022



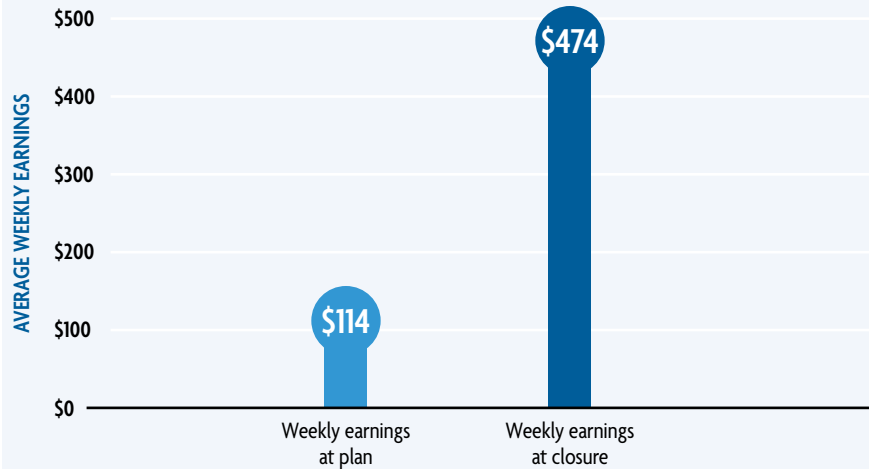
## OCCUPATIONS

3,720 Individuals With Successful Employment Outcomes: PY 2022



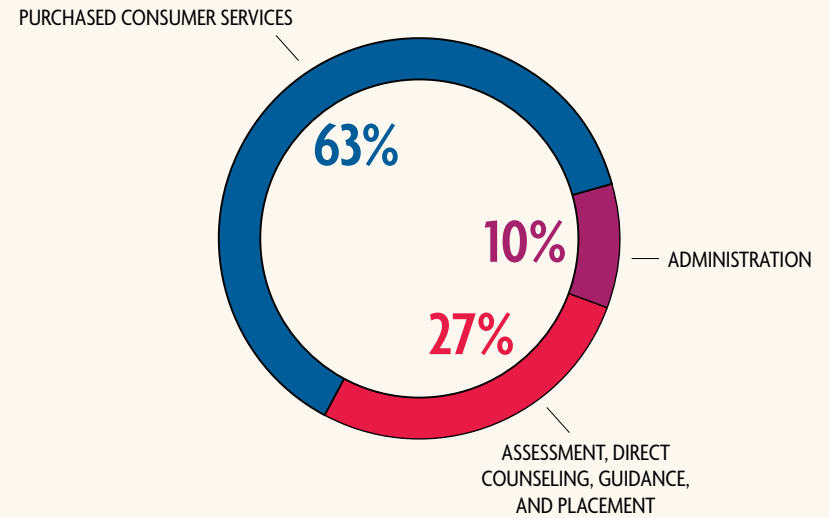
# PROGRAM DATA

## IMPACT OF VR SERVICES: PY 2022



With an increase in average weekly earnings of \$360 for 3,720 individuals with successful outcomes, the total annual increase in income amounted to \$69,638,400.

## EXPENDITURES: PY 2022



## GENDER

Individuals With Successful Employment Outcomes: PY 2022

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Male	2,061	55%
Female	1,649	44%
Did not wish to self-identify	10	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,720</b>	<b>100%</b>

## ETHNICITY

Individuals With Successful Employment Outcomes: PY 2022

ETHNICITY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
White	2,823	76%
African-American	664	18%
Hispanic	133	4%
American Indian	52	1%
Asian	38	<1%
Pacific Islander	10	<1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,720</b>	<b>100%</b>

## AGE

Individuals With Successful Employment Outcomes: PY 2022

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Less than 25	1,429	38%
25-34	713	19%
35-44	548	15%
45-54	478	13%
55-64	371	10%
65 and over	181	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,720</b>	<b>100%</b>



# OFFICES

## 1) CAPE GIRARDEAU VR

3102 Blattner Drive, Suite 103  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703  
Toll-free: 877-702-9883

## 2) CENTRAL OFFICE VR

3024 Dupont Circle  
Jefferson City, MO 65109  
Toll-free: 877-222-8963

## 3) CHILLICOTHE VR

603 W. Mohawk Road  
Chillicothe, MO 64601  
Toll-free: 866-572-4049

## 4) COLUMBIA VR

900 W. Nifong Blvd., Suite 210  
Columbia, MO 65203  
Toll-free: 877-222-8961

## 5) FARMINGTON VR

901 Progress Drive, Suite 100  
Farmington, MO 63640  
Toll-free: 800-640-7110

## 6) HANNIBAL VR

112 Jaycee Drive  
Hannibal, MO 63401  
Toll-free: 877-222-8960

## 7) JEFFERSON CITY VR

1500 Southridge Drive, Suite 200  
Jefferson City, MO 65109  
Toll-free: 866-661-9106

## 8) JOPLIN VR

801 E. 15th St., Suite B  
Joplin, MO 64804  
Toll-free: 877-222-8964

## 9) KANSAS CITY DOWNTOWN VR

615 E. 13th St., Suite 111  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
Toll-free: 866-971-8568

## 10) KANSAS CITY EAST/ TRANSITION VR

Joseph P. Teasdale State Office Building  
8800 E. 63rd St., Suite 260  
Raytown, MO 64133  
Toll-free: 866-831-1363

## 11) KANSAS CITY NORTH VR

8030 N. Oak Trafficway  
Kansas City, MO 64118  
Toll-free: 877-270-0198

## 12) KIRKSVILLE VR

1612 N. Osteopathy, Suite B  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
Toll-free: 877-222-8962

## 13) NEVADA VR

621 E. Highland Ave., Suite 2  
Nevada, MO 64772  
Toll-free: 800-598-3471

## 14) POPLAR BLUFF VR

1903 Northwood Drive, Suite 3  
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901  
Toll-free: 800-281-9894

## 15) ROLLA VR

1101A Kingshighway  
Rolla, MO 65401  
Toll-free: 800-890-2867

## 16) SEDALIA VR

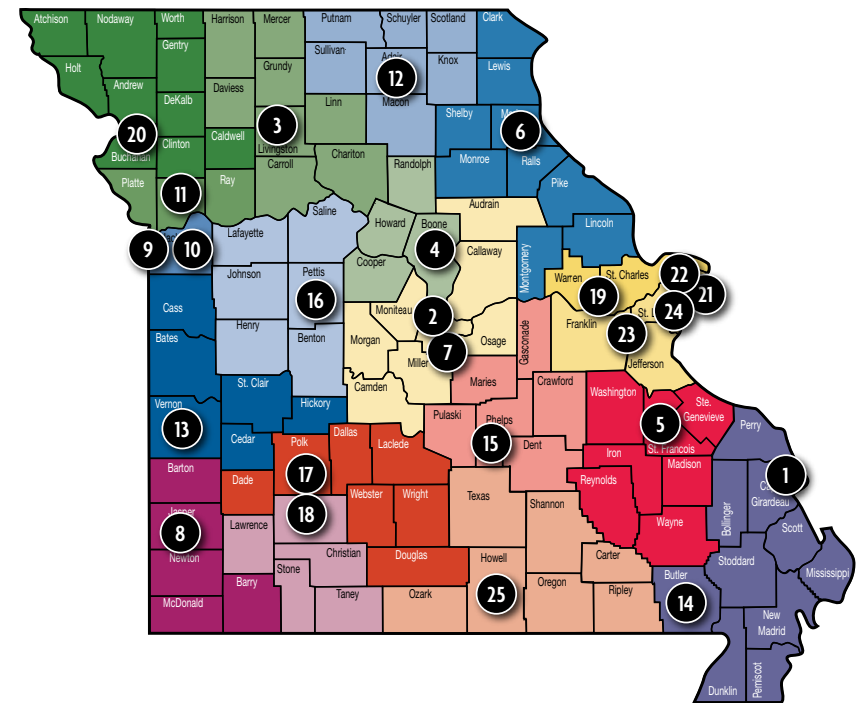
2115 W. Broadway Blvd.  
Sedalia, MO 65301  
Toll-free: 844-487-0495

## 17) SPRINGFIELD NORTH VR

613 E. Kearney St.  
Springfield, MO 65803  
Toll-free: 877-222-8965

## 18) SPRINGFIELD SOUTH VR

1735 W. Catalpa St., Suite C  
Springfield, MO 65807  
Toll-free: 877-222-8967



## 19) ST. CHARLES VR

3737 Harry S. Truman Blvd., Suite 400  
St. Charles, MO 63301  
Phone: 636-940-3300

## 20) ST. JOSEPH VR

State Office Building  
525 Jules St., Room 201  
St. Joseph, MO 64501  
Toll-free: 877-702-9876

## 21) ST. LOUIS DOWNTOWN VR

220 S. Jefferson Ave., Suite 110  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
Toll-free: 866-971-8569

## 22) ST. LOUIS NORTH VR

4040 Seven Hills Drive, Suite 257  
Florissant, MO 63033  
Phone: 314-475-7999

## 23) ST. LOUIS SOUTH VR

St. Louis South Service Center  
7545 S. Lindbergh Blvd., Suite 100  
St. Louis, MO 63125  
Toll-free: 877-222-8968

## 24) ST. LOUIS WEST/TRANSITION VR

9900 Page Ave., Suite 104  
St. Louis, MO 63132  
Phone: 314-587-4877

## 25) WEST PLAINS VR

3417 Division Drive, Suite 2  
West Plains, MO 65775  
Toll-free: 877-222-8959



Photo of Bagnell Dam at the Lake of the Ozarks provided by **Wayne Clause**.



**DECEMBER 2023**

Published by Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation  
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
3024 Dupont Circle, Jefferson City, MO 65109  
Website:

To request this report in an alternate format, call **573-751-3251** or toll-free **877-222-8963**.

*The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, veteran status, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Director of Civil Rights Compliance and MOA Coordinator (Title VI/Title VII/Title IX/504/ADA/ADAAA/Age Act/GINA/USDA Title VI), 5th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email [civilrights@dese.mo.gov](mailto:civilrights@dese.mo.gov). Anyone who requires auxiliary aids or services in connection with vocational rehabilitation services should contact Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation at 573-751-3251 or through Relay Missouri at TTY 800-735-2966, VOICE 866-735-2460 or dial 711.*

*The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For Federal Fiscal Year 2023, the total amount of grant funds awarded was \$70,447,118. The remaining 21.3 percent of the costs (\$19,066,374) was funded by state matching funds. The Supported Employment (SE) program receives 95 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For Federal Fiscal Year 2023, the total amount of grant funds awarded was \$274,286. The remaining 5 percent of the costs (\$14,436) was funded by state matching funds. The Independent Living (IL) program receives a portion of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For Federal Fiscal Year 2023, the total amount of grant funds awarded was \$348,060 (90 percent). The remaining 10 percent (\$38,673) was funded by state matching funds. The IL program also received additional state funding for an overall total of \$6,053,103.*